

**U.S. Department of Education - EDCAPS
G5-Technical Review Form (New)**

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 9/16/11 12:00 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Baltimore City Public Schools (U411C110047)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Summary Statement		
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	0	
Sub Total	0	
Selection Criteria		
Need for Project		
1. Need for Project	35	34
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	25	22
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Quality of the Management	20	20
Sub Total	80	76
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 6		
Competitive Preference Priority 6		
1. Competitive Preference 6	1	
Sub Total	1	
Competitive Preference Priority 7		
Competitive Preference Priority 7		
1. Competitive Preference 7	1	0
Sub Total	1	0
Competitive Preference Priority 8		
Competitive Preference Priority 8		
1. Competitive Preference Pr	1	
Sub Total	1	
Competitive Preference Priority 9		
Competitive Preference Priority 9		
1. Competitive Preference 9	1	
Sub Total	1	
Competitive Preference Priority 10		
Competitive Preference Priority 10		

1. Competitive Preference 10

1 1

Sub Total 1 1

Total 85 77

Technical Review Form

Panel #20 - 84.411C Panel - 20: 84.411C

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Baltimore City Public Schools (U411C110047)

Questions

Summary Statement - Summary Statement

1. Summary Statement (Optional)

General:

Reader's Score:

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. The Secretary considers the need for the project. In determining the need for the project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition.

(2) The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses.

(3) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that, if funded, the proposed project likely will have a positive impact, as measured by the importance or magnitude of the effect, on improving student achievement or student growth, closing achievement gaps, decreasing dropout rates, increasing high school graduation rates, or increasing college enrollment and completion rates.

Strengths:

The project brings together an LEA, non-profit organizations, universities, and private companies to implement a summer math and technology program that eliminates learning loss and increases student achievement in middle school students. This approach is exceptional as it involves multiple stakeholders and serves a diverse and underserved student population (Page e21).

The proposal includes extensive information and quantitative data that documents gaps in student learning. The identified gaps are well aligned to the project goals and measureable objectives (Pages e26-e30).

The proposal describes an effective plan for implementing a proven summer STEM program. The proposed approaches for the implementation of this plan would lead to increased student achievement. Particularly, the extended school options and the differentiation strategies for diverse learners strengthen the plan.

Weaknesses:

The project does not target student learning in science. Science learning objectives are an important part of STEM education. Additionally, there is not enough information to understand how the implementation of the robotics program would increase student interest with equity, particularly with diverse students. Traditionally, robotics competition teams do not include the diversity found in the local districts.

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the project design, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project has a clear set of goals and an explicit strategy, with actions that are
(a) aligned with the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet, and
(b) expected to result in achieving the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.

(2) The eligible applicant's estimate of the cost of the proposed project, which includes the start up and operating costs per student per year (including indirect costs) for reaching the total number of students proposed to be served by the project. The eligible applicant must include an estimate of the costs for the eligible applicant or others (including other partners) to reach 100,000, 250,000, and 500,000 students.

Note: The Secretary considers cost estimates both

(a) to assess the reasonableness of the costs relative to the objectives, design, and potential significance for the total number of students to be served by the proposed project, which is determined by the eligible applicant, and
(b) to understand the possible costs for the eligible applicant or others (including other partners) to reach the scaling targets of 100,000, 250,000, and 500,000 students for Development grants. An eligible applicant is free to propose how many students it will serve under its project, and is expected to reach that number of students by the end of the grant period. The scaling targets, in contrast, are theoretical and allow peer reviewers to assess the cost-effectiveness generally of proposed projects, particularly in cases where initial investment may be required to support projects that operate at reduced cost in the future, whether implemented by the eligible applicant or any other entity. Grantees are not required to reach these numbers during the grant period.

(3) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.

(4) The potential and planning for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing work of the eligible applicant and any other partners at the end of the Development grant.

Strengths:

The project goals in the areas of recruitment, attendance, student achievement, and teacher effectiveness are aligned with the targeted absolute priority. The strategies outlined in the proposal and the identified goals are aligned and would lead to the successful attainment of the expected outcomes from the project. The proposal includes benchmarks and channels for gathering data throughout the implementation of the project. Additionally, the project supports the implementation of the Common Core Mathematic Standards by supporting individualized instruction and providing teacher training (Page e78).

The project provides an estimated cost of \$2100 per student. This seems to be a very adequate cost given the scope of the project and the expected student benefits. The proposal also provides the costs to reach 100,000, 250,000, and 500,000 students.

The proposal describes a plan that would provide local funds to continue the project at the end of the grant (Page e36).

Weaknesses:

There is not enough information for the strategies for maintaining the 70% attendance, including motivators for attendance and enrollment. The successful recruitment and attendance of a summer program requires strong student and parent motivators. A better plan for improved attendance would expand the reach of the

project and achieve the stated goals.

Reader's Score: 22

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

(1) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks, as well as tasks related to the sustainability and scalability of the proposed project.

(2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director and key project personnel, especially in managing projects of the size and scope of the proposed project.

Strengths:

The proposal includes a timeline, a budget, and a logic model that clearly defines the responsibilities, milestones, and well defined benchmarks for accomplishing project tasks (Page e44-e47). Particularly, the plan offers a clear delegation of duties, detailed evaluations and reporting, and a detailed budget. Furthermore, the proposal includes partnerships that offer multiple levels of support for the project.

The project director and the key personnel that would oversee this project possess ample experience and the competence to implement a project of the size and scope described in the proposal. The leadership team includes researchers, grant specialists, math and robotics experts, and assessment specialists. The inclusion of the international robotics coach of the year provides proven leadership for the robotics plan.

Weaknesses:

no weaknesses noted

Reader's Score: 20

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority 6 - Competitive Preference Priority 6

- 1. Competitive Preference Priority 6 - Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (zero or one point)**

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve educational outcomes for high-need students who are young children (birth through 3rd grade) by enhancing the quality of early learning programs. To meet this priority, applications must focus on

(a) improving young children's school readiness (including social, emotional, and cognitive readiness) so that children are prepared for success in core academic subjects (as defined in section 9101(11) of the ESEA);

(b) improving developmental milestones and standards and aligning them with appropriate outcome measures; and

(c) improving alignment, collaboration, and transitions between early learning programs that serve

children from birth to age three, in preschools, and in kindergarten through third grade.

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

Competitive Preference Priority 7 - Competitive Preference Priority 7

1. Competitive Preference Priority 7 - Innovations that Support College Access and Success (zero or one point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to enable kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) students, particularly high school students, to successfully prepare for, enter, and graduate from a two- or four-year college. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs for K-12 students that

(a) address students' preparedness and expectations related to college;

(b) help students understand issues of college affordability and the financial aid and college application processes; and

(c) provide support to students from peers and knowledgeable adults.

Strengths:

The project provides students with mentors that expose students to postsecondary education through college campus tours, financial aid presentations, mentorships with students and staff, and more.

Weaknesses:

The proposed use of presentations to address issues of college affordability would not be as effective as implementing interactive activities that allow students to truly understand how to compare college costs or navigate scholarship and financial aid applications. It is unclear how much information would be retained by the time that the students have to apply for college.

Reader's Score: 0

Competitive Preference Priority 8 - Competitive Preference Priority 8

1. Competitive Preference Priority 8 - Innovations to Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students with Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (zero or one point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to address the unique learning needs of students with disabilities, including those who are assessed based on alternate academic achievement standards, or the linguistic and academic needs of limited English proficient students. To meet this priority, applications must provide for the implementation of particular practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve academic outcomes, close achievement gaps, and increase college- and career-readiness, including increasing high school graduation rates (as defined in this notice), for students with disabilities or limited English proficient students.

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

Competitive Preference Priority 9 - Competitive Preference Priority 9

1. Competitive Preference Priority 9 - Improving Productivity (zero or one point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that are designed to significantly increase efficiency in the use of time, staff, money, or other resources while improving student learning or other educational outcomes (i.e., outcome per unit of resource). Such projects may include innovative and sustainable uses of technology, modification of school schedules and teacher compensation systems, use of open educational resources (as defined in this notice), or other strategies.

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

Competitive Preference Priority 10 - Competitive Preference Priority 10

1. Competitive Preference Priority 10 - Technology (zero or one point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that are designed to improve student achievement or teacher effectiveness through the use of high-quality digital tools or materials, which may include preparing teachers to use the technology to improve instruction, as well as developing, implementing, or evaluating digital tools or materials.

Strengths:

The project includes the use of a robotics and programming curriculum that are designed to improve student interest and achievement.

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score: 1

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 9/16/11 12:00 AM

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 9/9/11 12:00 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Baltimore City Public Schools (U411C110047)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Summary Statement		
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	0	
Sub Total	0	
Selection Criteria		
Need for Project		
1. Need for Project	35	33
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	25	22
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Quality of the Management	20	20
Sub Total	80	75
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 6		
Competitive Preference Priority 6		
1. Competitive Preference 6	1	
Sub Total	1	
Competitive Preference Priority 7		
Competitive Preference Priority 7		
1. Competitive Preference 7	1	1
Sub Total	1	1
Competitive Preference Priority 8		
Competitive Preference Priority 8		
1. Competitive Preference Pr	1	
Sub Total	1	
Competitive Preference Priority 9		
Competitive Preference Priority 9		
1. Competitive Preference 9	1	
Sub Total	1	
Competitive Preference Priority 10		
Competitive Preference Priority 10		

1. Competitive Preference 10	1	0
Sub Total	1	0
Total	85	76

Technical Review Form

Panel #20 - 84.411C Panel - 20: 84.411C

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Baltimore City Public Schools (U411C110047)

Questions

Summary Statement - Summary Statement

1. Summary Statement (Optional)

General:

Reader's Score:

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. The Secretary considers the need for the project. In determining the need for the project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition.

(2) The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses.

(3) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that, if funded, the proposed project likely will have a positive impact, as measured by the importance or magnitude of the effect, on improving student achievement or student growth, closing achievement gaps, decreasing dropout rates, increasing high school graduation rates, or increasing college enrollment and completion rates.

Strengths:

One of the strengths of the proposal is the details as they pertain to standardized assessments and student retention of knowledge after summer break. The program shows preliminary positive results in retention of knowledge and standardized assessment scores. The program will also facilitate greater attendance and student involvement through the VEX robotics competitions. These approaches align with research suggesting retention of knowledge after summer school and engagement in classroom activities are crucial components for future success in STEM related endeavors and improving student achievement.

Weaknesses:

More detail concerning how the approach is exceptional is needed. Discussion centers on increasing standardized assessment scores but does not address other pertinent goals and issues such as how retention will be utilized post-summer school and other avenues for facilitating interest in students who are not intrigued by the VEX robotics. The focus on robotics gives potential to attract a small set of students with specific interests while alienating possible interest from other students.

Reader's Score: 33

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the project design, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project has a clear set of goals and an explicit strategy, with actions that are
(a) aligned with the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet, and
(b) expected to result in achieving the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.

(2) The eligible applicant's estimate of the cost of the proposed project, which includes the start up and operating costs per student per year (including indirect costs) for reaching the total number of students proposed to be served by the project. The eligible applicant must include an estimate of the costs for the eligible applicant or others (including other partners) to reach 100,000, 250,000, and 500,000 students.

Note: The Secretary considers cost estimates both

(a) to assess the reasonableness of the costs relative to the objectives, design, and potential significance for the total number of students to be served by the proposed project, which is determined by the eligible applicant, and
(b) to understand the possible costs for the eligible applicant or others (including other partners) to reach the scaling targets of 100,000, 250,000, and 500,000 students for Development grants. An eligible applicant is free to propose how many students it will serve under its project, and is expected to reach that number of students by the end of the grant period. The scaling targets, in contrast, are theoretical and allow peer reviewers to assess the cost-effectiveness generally of proposed projects, particularly in cases where initial investment may be required to support projects that operate at reduced cost in the future, whether implemented by the eligible applicant or any other entity. Grantees are not required to reach these numbers during the grant period.

(3) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.

(4) The potential and planning for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing work of the eligible applicant and any other partners at the end of the Development grant.

Strengths:

One clear goal of the proposal is to increase standardized assessment scores for students. Recruitment goals are well established and target underrepresented students in STEM fields (p. e30). A crucial component to summer school programs that do not require mandatory attendance is concrete goals for attaining high attendance rates. The proposal suggests attendance goals and measures for tracking the effectiveness of the program facilitating strong attendance (p. e31). The ambitious and important goal of retention of knowledge by 100% of the students attending and teacher accountability in the program are discussed. Students will receive core mathematics instruction while individualizing the curriculum via FIM, which will ensure common goals and the support necessary for all students to reach said goals. The teacher training component is crucial to ensure collaboration between the math instructor and robotics coach (p. e35).

Weaknesses:

Although the costs are within the average parameters for a summer school program, the reasonableness given the attraction only for students interested in robotics excludes a population of students who could benefit from the goals of the program. Integration of further motivators for enrollment and attendance beyond the robotics would strengthen the proposal.

Reader's Score: 22

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks, as well as tasks related to the sustainability and scalability of the proposed project.

(2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director and key project personnel, especially in managing projects of the size and scope of the proposed project.

Strengths:

Having the International Robotics Coach of the Year in 2009 lead students in the robotics portion of the curriculum provides quality instruction and a unique perspective from a proven expert in the field. Further, the traditional hierarchy associated with the program provides support on multiple levels from coordinators to the director of teaching and learning, including well defined roles and responsibilities. Partnerships with Fund, BERC, and other organizations will facilitate a quality research component and support from the private sector. The combined experiences with regard to research, overseeing grants, curricula alignment, expertise in mathematics curricula, robotics expertise, and assessment reform provides diverse input and support on pertinent levels of implementation and sustainability. The personnel coupled with the detailed timeline and budget will facilitate the proper management plan for success (pp. e45 e47).

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority 6 - Competitive Preference Priority 6

1. Competitive Preference Priority 6 - Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (zero or one point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve educational outcomes for high-need students who are young children (birth through 3rd grade) by enhancing the quality of early learning programs. To meet this priority, applications must focus on

(a) improving young children's school readiness (including social, emotional, and cognitive readiness) so that children are prepared for success in core academic subjects (as defined in section 9101(11) of the ESEA);

(b) improving developmental milestones and standards and aligning them with appropriate outcome measures; and

(c) improving alignment, collaboration, and transitions between early learning programs that serve children from birth to age three, in preschools, and in kindergarten through third grade.

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

Competitive Preference Priority 7 - Competitive Preference Priority 7

1. Competitive Preference Priority 7 - Innovations that Support College Access and Success (zero or one point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to enable kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) students, particularly high school students, to successfully prepare for, enter, and graduate from a two- or four-year college. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs for K-12 students that

(a) address students' preparedness and expectations related to college;

(b) help students understand issues of college affordability and the financial aid and college application processes; and

(c) provide support to students from peers and knowledgeable adults.

Strengths:

The program being housed on college campuses offers a unique perspective and valuable interactions as they pertain to college life. The presentation will offer familiarity with financial aid and the application process. The mentors will also facilitate interactions with people immersed in college life.

Weaknesses:

Student retention of concrete skills via presentations is not as interactive as students participating in the process. It is unclear how much of the information students will retain when they will apply for college a few years later. Concrete experiences with the application process rather than a presentation may be more effective.

Reader's Score: 1

Competitive Preference Priority 8 - Competitive Preference Priority 8

1. Competitive Preference Priority 8 - Innovations to Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students with Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (zero or one point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to address the unique learning needs of students with disabilities, including those who are assessed based on alternate academic achievement standards, or the linguistic and academic needs of limited English proficient students. To meet this priority, applications must provide for the implementation of particular practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve academic outcomes, close achievement gaps, and increase college- and career-readiness, including increasing high school graduation rates (as defined in this notice), for students with disabilities or limited English proficient students.

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

Competitive Preference Priority 9 - Competitive Preference Priority 9

1. Competitive Preference Priority 9 - Improving Productivity (zero or one point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that are designed to significantly increase efficiency in the use of time, staff, money, or other resources while improving student learning or other educational outcomes (i.e., outcome per unit of resource). Such projects may include innovative and sustainable uses of technology, modification of school schedules and teacher compensation systems, use of open educational resources (as defined in this notice), or other strategies.

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

Competitive Preference Priority 10 - Competitive Preference Priority 10

1. Competitive Preference Priority 10 - Technology (zero or one point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that are designed to improve student achievement or teacher effectiveness through the use of high-quality digital tools or materials, which may include preparing teachers to use the technology to improve instruction, as well as developing, implementing, or evaluating digital tools or materials.

Strengths:

The use of computers to individualize instruction according to pacing, introduction to computer programming, and VEX Robotics provides an introductory level to the use of technology. The experiences also provide a means of building upon basic skills and sparking interest for future endeavors.

Weaknesses:

It is unclear when the computers will be used and when help of a staff member will replace computer usage. LCD Projectors are innovative and provide a visual, but it is teacher-centered technology and does little to increase technological skills for students.

Reader's Score: **0**

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 9/9/11 12:00 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 9/14/11 12:00 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Baltimore City Public Schools (U411C110047)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Summary Statement		
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	0	
Sub Total	0	
Selection Criteria		
Need for Project		
1. Need for Project	35	34
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	25	22
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Quality of the Management	20	20
Sub Total	80	76
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 6		
Competitive Preference Priority 6		
1. Competitive Preference 6	1	
Sub Total	1	
Competitive Preference Priority 7		
Competitive Preference Priority 7		
1. Competitive Preference 7	1	0
Sub Total	1	0
Competitive Preference Priority 8		
Competitive Preference Priority 8		
1. Competitive Preference Pr	1	
Sub Total	1	
Competitive Preference Priority 9		
Competitive Preference Priority 9		
1. Competitive Preference 9	1	
Sub Total	1	
Competitive Preference Priority 10		
Competitive Preference Priority 10		

1. Competitive Preference 10

	1	0
Sub Total	1	0
Total	85	76

Technical Review Form

Panel #20 - 84.411C Panel - 20: 84.411C

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Baltimore City Public Schools (U411C110047)

Questions

Summary Statement - Summary Statement

1. Summary Statement (Optional)

General:

Reader's Score:

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. The Secretary considers the need for the project. In determining the need for the project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition.

(2) The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses.

(3) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that, if funded, the proposed project likely will have a positive impact, as measured by the importance or magnitude of the effect, on improving student achievement or student growth, closing achievement gaps, decreasing dropout rates, increasing high school graduation rates, or increasing college enrollment and completion rates.

Strengths:

The project proposal builds on a successful STEM Summer Learning Program and describes a plan that sets even higher goals (e26-e29). The program uses data to support a hypothesis for student achievement goals that are expected for the project (e27-e28). The project will be accessible and beneficial to all students and educators involved, and it addresses the specific needs of underrepresented students. In order to interest students in the project, robotics will be used as a basis for mathematics instruction (e32).

Weaknesses:

Robotics may not interest all students, and the proposal does not discuss an alternative model or theme to keep students interested.

Reader's Score: 34

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the project design, the Secretary considers

the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project has a clear set of goals and an explicit strategy, with actions that are
(a) aligned with the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet, and
(b) expected to result in achieving the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.

(2) The eligible applicant's estimate of the cost of the proposed project, which includes the start up and operating costs per student per year (including indirect costs) for reaching the total number of students proposed to be served by the project. The eligible applicant must include an estimate of the costs for the eligible applicant or others (including other partners) to reach 100,000, 250,000, and 500,000 students.

Note: The Secretary considers cost estimates both

(a) to assess the reasonableness of the costs relative to the objectives, design, and potential significance for the total number of students to be served by the proposed project, which is determined by the eligible applicant, and
(b) to understand the possible costs for the eligible applicant or others (including other partners) to reach the scaling targets of 100,000, 250,000, and 500,000 students for Development grants. An eligible applicant is free to propose how many students it will serve under its project, and is expected to reach that number of students by the end of the grant period. The scaling targets, in contrast, are theoretical and allow peer reviewers to assess the cost-effectiveness generally of proposed projects, particularly in cases where initial investment may be required to support projects that operate at reduced cost in the future, whether implemented by the eligible applicant or any other entity. Grantees are not required to reach these numbers during the grant period.

(3) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.

(4) The potential and planning for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing work of the eligible applicant and any other partners at the end of the Development grant.

Strengths:

The project proposal addresses a mathematics goal to maintain and/or increase 100% of the student scores (e31), and goals are aligned with priorities. Teacher training and effectiveness during the project will be assessed (e32). These goals are focused on student achievement and success in STEM areas. Active recruitment will be used to enroll students so that underrepresented students are involved in the program (e35). The proposal includes a cost per student estimate. Sustainability of the program after the grant period ends is addressed (e36). Common Core Standards for Mathematics and benchmarks will be used to individualize math instruction for students. Achievement will be analyzed and will be reported on an on-going basis (e38-e40). Professional development for teachers involved in the program will be evaluated (e38). Sustainability, scalability, and sharing of the program is anticipated after federal funding for the project ends (e47).

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not mention motivators that will be used to help students meet attendance goals for the summer program. The project proposal does not address how students not interested in robotics will be encouraged to be involved in the program.

Reader's Score: 22

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks, as well as tasks related to the sustainability and scalability of the proposed project.

(2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director and key project personnel, especially in managing projects of the size and scope of the proposed project.

Strengths:

The proposal gives a clear delegation of project responsibilities for personnel, and the personnel are qualified and represent diverse areas of expertise needed for a project of this magnitude (e40-e44). A projected cost per student is included in the narrative (e35-e36). A project timeline is detailed with evaluation and reports expected (e44-e47). The budget narrative is detailed and clear (e92-e107).

Weaknesses:

None observed.

Reader's Score: 20

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority 6 - Competitive Preference Priority 6

1. Competitive Preference Priority 6 - Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (zero or one point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve educational outcomes for high-need students who are young children (birth through 3rd grade) by enhancing the quality of early learning programs. To meet this priority, applications must focus on

(a) improving young children's school readiness (including social, emotional, and cognitive readiness) so that children are prepared for success in core academic subjects (as defined in section 9101(11) of the ESEA);

(b) improving developmental milestones and standards and aligning them with appropriate outcome measures; and

(c) improving alignment, collaboration, and transitions between early learning programs that serve children from birth to age three, in preschools, and in kindergarten through third grade.

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

Competitive Preference Priority 7 - Competitive Preference Priority 7

1. Competitive Preference Priority 7 - Innovations that Support College Access and Success (zero or one point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to enable kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) students, particularly high school students, to successfully prepare for, enter, and graduate from a two- or four-year college. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs for K-12 students that

(a) address students' preparedness and expectations related to college;

(b) help students understand issues of college affordability and the financial aid and college application processes; and

(c) provide support to students from peers and knowledgeable adults.

Strengths:

Mentors from industry and university students will be used during the robotics competition.

Weaknesses:

An introduction to mentors, college students, and a university tour with presentations about application and finances may provide a glimpse for middle school students of the level of education they may achieve. The project proposal does not address how this experience will be enough to hold students focus for three to four years when it is time for the students to consider college enrollment.

Reader's Score: 0

Competitive Preference Priority 8 - Competitive Preference Priority 8

1. Competitive Preference Priority 8 - Innovations to Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students with Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (zero or one point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to address the unique learning needs of students with disabilities, including those who are assessed based on alternate academic achievement standards, or the linguistic and academic needs of limited English proficient students. To meet this priority, applications must provide for the implementation of particular practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve academic outcomes, close achievement gaps, and increase college- and career-readiness, including increasing high school graduation rates (as defined in this notice), for students with disabilities or limited English proficient students.

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

Competitive Preference Priority 9 - Competitive Preference Priority 9

1. Competitive Preference Priority 9 - Improving Productivity (zero or one point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that are designed to significantly increase efficiency in the use of time, staff, money, or other resources while improving student learning or other

educational outcomes (i.e., outcome per unit of resource). Such projects may include innovative and sustainable uses of technology, modification of school schedules and teacher compensation systems, use of open educational resources (as defined in this notice), or other strategies.

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

Competitive Preference Priority 10 - Competitive Preference Priority 10

1. Competitive Preference Priority 10 - Technology (zero or one point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that are designed to improve student achievement or teacher effectiveness through the use of high-quality digital tools or materials, which may include preparing teachers to use the technology to improve instruction, as well as developing, implementing, or evaluating digital tools or materials.

Strengths:

The program is designed to engage students using STEM content, robotics, and programming.

Weaknesses:

The proposal does not include details about the extent that teachers and students will be using computer technology throughout the project and if the use of technology is teacher or student centered.

Reader's Score: **0**

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 9/14/11 12:00 AM